



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES CHILD SUPPORT ADVISORY BOARD

Los Angeles County
Board of Supervisors

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2009

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CHILD SUPPORT ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES JUNE 25, 2009

Present

2nd District, Pat Miller
3rd District, Lucy T. Eisenberg, Esq., Chair
3rd District, Honey Kessler Amado
4th District, Scarlet Treu
5th District, Reginald Brass
5th District, Susan Speir, Vice Chair
Steven Golightly, CSSD
Susan Jakubowski, DCFS
Gene A. Franklin, Sr., CIO
Silvia Valencia, DPSS
Kristine Reiser-Juick, Superior Court

Guests

Jennifer Coultas, CSSD
David Kilgore, CSSD
Lori Cruz, CSSD
Lawrence Hill, 721 Union

Kaye McKay, CSSD

Staff

Lee Millen, Commission Services
Nyla Jefferson, Commission Services

Absent

2nd District, Paula Leftwich
4th District, Jean Cohen

Mary Lawrence, DCSS
Debbie Strong, Franchise Tax Board

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Eisenberg called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. in Room 372, Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Eisenberg reported that she and Director Golightly discussed the issue of the CSAB meeting bi-monthly or monthly. Previously, due to staff time spent on conversion, the Board of Supervisors had approved a one-year bi-monthly CSAB meeting schedule.

Director Golightly noted that since the economic downturn CSSD has experienced an increased caseload, a hiring freeze, and reduced staff levels. A revisit in six months of monthly meetings is suggested.

Following discussion, on motion of Chair Eisenberg, seconded by Member Amado and unanimously carried, the CSAB agreed to meet bi-monthly and revisit the issue in six months, pending Board of Supervisors' approval, if required.

Also, Chair Eisenberg requested that the CSAB meet on August 20, 2009. The CSAB concurred.

APPROVE MINUTES OF APRIL 23, 2009

On motion of Vice Chair Speir, seconded by Member Treu and unanimously carried, the minutes of April 23, 2009, were approved as submitted.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT TO INCLUDE: UPDATE ON STATE AND COUNTY BUDGET AND EFFECT ON CSSD; CSTAT MEETINGS – STEVEN GOLIGHTLY

Steven Golightly, Director, CSSD, reported the following:

Update on State and County Budget and Effect on CSSD: The State budget includes an increase for child support operations, predicated on an increase in child support collection efforts. However, the County reduced the CSSD budget as a result. The County completed budget deliberations on Monday with no layoffs or furloughs planned at this time.

CSSD is changing its business model to improve Call Center performance: Previously a 24 minute wait time one year ago, now the Customer Connect system is utilized and wait time is at 12 minutes. There is an increase in requests for lowering and increasing modifications; KCET, LA Times, NY Times recently reported on modification efforts in LA County. David Kilgore reported that Mod review is enormously time consuming, the vast majority of Mods are denied with approval at 5-6%, and approvals require justification that income has changed.

Staff interacts at the CSTAT meetings, which Chair Eisenberg has attended, exchanging best practices that can be incorporated by other Divisions, and key indicators and data from the respective Divisions are reviewed to make changes in workflow activities; this forum has been very effective in improving performance outcomes. CSTAT is child support stats that are available on the County intranet and David Kilgore is the point of contact.

Personnel Changes: An organizational chart was distributed (copy on file) and explained. Jennifer Coultas is newly assigned to Court Operations, and David Kilgore is the point of contact for CSAB activities. Staff changes made is an attempt to enhance customer service.

Vice Chair Speir related a client's experience with a private company, Child Support Services, Inc., that advised that child support payments be paid to its company or a

wage garnishment would occur; the company keeps 35% and forwards 65% to the CP. Ms. Coultas was alerted and contacted the DCSS, however, it seems that the local D.A. and or the Attorney General are best suited to take action on this issue. Member Reiser-Juick advised that in Orange County non-English speaking residents have been duped by unethical company representatives, although CSSD completes child support related documents gratis. Also, documents that private companies utilize look like authentic county forms.

Discussion ensued on the course of action the CSAB could take in this regard. It was agreed that a Sub Committee comprised of Chair Eisenberg, Vice Chair Speir, and Member Amado should draft a letter to the Board of Supervisors advising them of this concern and recommending dissemination of information regarding this predatory practice.

REVIEW AND DISCUSS PERFORMANCE MEASURES – DAVID KILGORE

In response to Chair Eisenberg, Mr. Kilgore reported that the decline in performance is due to the conversion, in that ARS indicated performance in the high 70's and CSE stats are lower due to an error listing active orders as historic. Also, Call Center stats show that Wait Time is down from 16 minutes to a 7:42 range, and Call Inquiries are down 58% in that many more calls are going to the state. Further, Director Golightly advised that the number of State Hearing cases decreased in that determinations are now made in-house by the DCSS; case stats for May are forthcoming.

REVIEW OF CASE ESTABLISHMENT PROCESS – LORI CRUZ

Lori Cruz, Deputy Director, distributed the Establishment Process (copy on file) and summarized the work flow utilized in case processing and its timeframe; all case applications go to a single Division in Commerce, and processing is on average no more than six (6) months, with the outer timeframe up to 12 months. Case Establishment Teams work utilizing the Case Ownership Business Model (copy on file) in which CSOs carry a caseload to fruition assisted in the process by an auditor and an attorney, and follow through to a stipulation and or a court order.

Chair Eisenberg requested an update on the program in August.

REVIEW OF C2G PROCESS, INCLUDING REPORT ON PALMDALE PILOT – DAVID KILGORE AND KAYE MCKAY

David Kilgore distributed a Division VI – Palmdale Case Ownership organizational chart (copy on file) that focuses on the establishment and enforcement components of CSSD's customer services AIM pilot project. The pilot reorganization allowed staff to work the core of enforcement, drop case load ratio, and to have the Case Manager work one on one with the NCP. Federal Performance Measures are being used at this time, however, once the State's goals are established CSSD's will follow.

Kaye McKay, Division VI Administrator - Palmdale, distributed information on the AIM Pilot (copy on file) that began in July 2008 to objectively improve performances per their

responsible jurisdiction. Equally important was to improve customer service which has been the most rewarding. Division VI moved from a functionality model to a case ownership model. The major components that contributed to its success were the Call Center support by introducing the program to clients, making cold calls/collections and taking credit card payments. Also, of importance was the staff attorney's assistance in handling the highest arrears cases, liquidating arrears, determining whether cases should be closed and taking appropriate action. Functionalities retained were Worker's Comp, COOP, missing identified case participants, and litigation.

Case Managers/CSOs interview NCPs and duty CSOs initially interview CPs. As a result, the pilot establishes a Full Case Ownership Program where the attorney is aligned with an actual enforcement team. Also, a partnership was developed with WorkSource Center employment agency for NCPs needing a job. Ms. McKay alluded to personal monthly outreach provided in the Palmdale community, and staff outreach in neighboring areas.

In response to Chair Eisenberg, Director Golightly reported that Division VI customer service complaints are less than before and less than in other divisions. In August he will provide performance measures of Division VI with current support, arrears and complaints. Los Angeles is one of the last Departments to implement case ownership, whose concept has demonstrated significant improvements. This program will be implemented in all Divisions by October 2009. Chair Eisenberg thanked Ms. McKay for her informative presentation.

REPORT ON SURVEY SAMPLE OF NEWLY ESTABLISHED CASES – DAVID KILGORE

David Kilgore referred to a New Order Analysis (copy on file) of new court orders entered for the month of April, May and June 2009. CSOs reviewed a sample of 60 cases from the List and found that 54 of the 60 cases had an Order Filed, and 6 of the 60 cases had no Order Filed. On average the child support amount was \$468 for the 22 cases with orders filed by either stipulation or default; the accrued arrears balance was \$2,987; and 249 days transpired between the date that the summons and complaint was filed and the order was signed.

The CSE process is a more efficient system that forces the process into a shorter timeframe and with less staff time devoted to case completion. The number of days from S&C Date to Order Filed Date for the 60 cases reviewed indicates a significant decrease in case processing, from a high of 953 days to 101 days.

Discussion ensued on the need for CSSD to develop a strategy to assist in reducing arrearages. Mr. Kilgore advised that a prejudgment intervention letter has been used to meet NCPs in office to stipulate to an agreement, without which a court order is generated.

The Early Intervention Program is being implemented at the direction of the State and is attached to the \$18 million dollar increase to the child support budget; each county is required to implement this plan which begins July 1st. The State will be tracking the

money collected on cases involved in the EI project through the CSE system. Mr. Golightly noted that while the Child Support budget was increased by \$18 million, and LA got a share of this, LA County decreased its contribution to LA CSSD by the same amount. So, the budget effectively stayed flat. LA CSSD has 4 specific initiatives within the EI plan:

- Pre Order Stipulation: After receiving a served S&C back from the process server, we will be setting up an interview with both parties to try and negotiate a stipulation at that time. This interview will be done by the attorneys.
- Stern Invitation Letter: After 90 days of no payments, this letter will be sent to the non-custodial parent (NCP) to come to the courthouse for an appointment with an attorney. Attempts will be made at that time to negotiate payments and/or initiate a modification when appropriate
- Post-Court Follow-up interview: After the Commissioner has concluded the hearing, the NCP will be directed back up to the 18th floor of the courthouse to have an attorney review with them the results of the order, next steps, and try to get a payment at that time.
- Special Calendar: This project allows certain types of cases, like GR recipients or incarcerated individuals, to very quickly get their order modified.

REVIEW GOAL 4 OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN – DAVID KILGORE

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

DPSS PROCEDURES FOR IDENTIFYING AND RETRIEVING WELFARE OVERPAYMENTS – SILVIA VALENCIA

Silvia Valencia, DPSS, reported that the Department's computer software, unfortunately, is unable to identify UAPs; basically, AP information is exchanged electronically. However, a DPSS unit manually audits payments upon special request from CSSD. Procurement bids have been requested for a new computer system to incorporate UAP, generate reports on overpayment/UAPs amounts, and create an alert. Also, child support payments to welfare are sometimes overpaid/unnoticed and unknown to the CP; the CP could in effect not receive the funds until after the child is an adult. However, the State has cut change requests, therefore, funding for current improvements is not available.

Vice Chair Speir requested a follow-up report on strategies to ensure that recipients can receive the payments more timely.

REVIEW OF DELAYS IN PROCESSING COAP APPLICATIONS DUE TO UAP SPECIAL PROJECT AND WHAT IS BEING DONE TO HANDLE BACKLOG

Lori Cruz, CSSD, reported that with more than 5,000 negative UAP cases prior to the conversion, a special project was set in motion prior to converting to CCSAS that dealt with negative UAPs to determine if they were true negative UAPs. With DPSS assistance, it was determined that most of the cases were not negative UAPs but actually monies still owed to welfare. For the last two weeks of June, the preparation of audits by DPSS staff was put on hold until CSSD staff could deliver training on CSE;

training occurred on June 30, 2009. In response to Member Amado, Ms. Valencia confirmed there is no expedited process for the public to request an UAP audit. Director Golightly's staff will review the COAP statute that may prevent the NCP from making two payments in the first month of initial child support payments.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Eisenberg declared the meeting adjourned at 12:01 p.m.